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SENSITIVE  
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SUBJECT: TFH01: CANDIDATES MEET ZELAYA AND MICHELETTI AND  
ISSUE COMMUNIQUE

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 961

[1](#)B. TEGUCIGALPA 950

[1](#)C. TEGUCIGALPA 942

[1](#)D. TEGUCIGALPA 904

[1](#)1. (U) Summary. The four presidential candidates who on September 16 traveled to Costa Rica to meet with President Arias met on September 24 with de facto regime head Roberto Micheletti and later the same day with President Jose Manuel "Mel" Zelaya at the Brazilian Embassy. There was widespread and positive coverage of the meetings in the September 25 editions of national newspapers. The candidates issued a communique calling for an end to violence, a resumption of dialogue within the San Jose Accord framework, and recognition by the international community of the general elections scheduled for November 29. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Presidential candidates Elvin Santos of the Liberal Party, Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo of the National Party, Felicito Avila of the Christian Democratic Party, and Bernard Martinez of the Social Democratic Innovation and Unity Party (PINU) met on September 24 with de facto regime leader Roberto Micheletti and subsequently went to the Brazilian Embassy and met with President Jose Manuel "Mel" Zelaya. Press coverage on September 25 of the meetings was positive and upbeat. "La Tribuna," which is owned by the family of former President Carlos Flores, a member of the Liberal Party, carried a headline stating: "Presidential candidates urge dialogue." "El Tiempo," an independent newspaper with a liberal orientation owned by Liberal Party supporter Jaime Rosenthal stated on the first page "Dialogue Begins" above a photograph of the four candidates with President Zelaya. "El Herald," an independent newspaper that supports the de facto regime, had a headline proclaiming "They Lead the Way to Dialogue on Arias Accord."

[1](#)3. (U) The candidates issued a communique, signed by all four candidates. Below please find Embassy translation of the communique.

Begin Text.

Joint Communique of the Presidential Candidates

We, Bernard Martinez, candidate of the Social Democratic Innovation and Unity Party, Elvin Santos Ordonez, candidate of the Liberal Party, Felicito Avila, candidate of the Christian Democratic Party of Honduras and Porfirio Lobo Sosa, candidate of the National Party, fully conscious of and

committed to the need to find a peaceful and democratic resolution to the crisis which our country is currently experiencing, address ourselves to the Honduran people in the following manner:

¶1. This is a time that requires a major effort from us to reunite the Honduran family and for all to put aside individual interests in favor of the common good and of major national interests. We need to abandon violent and confrontational positions and ask God our Creator to guide our actions and help us make the best decisions because we are all part of this people who deserve a future with hope.

¶2. We reiterate that we the presidential candidates have expressed to Costa Rican President Oscar Arias our support for his mediation, therefore we urge the parties to resume dialogue that, with the additions and contributions that could be agreed upon during the negotiation process, could consensually serve as the path to a just and balanced solution to the current political crisis.

¶3. It is imperative to recognize that the use of force only causes more anxiety, such as anguish and irreparable damage to the country, which is why we demand that all provocative measures cease, that the life and security of persons be respected, that instigating acts of violence cease, as a clear sign domestically and to the international community that the parties wish to renew civilized dialogue and consultation in order to return to the Honduran people the peace and tranquillity they deserve and demand.

¶4. We ratify our position that there is no more logical or

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convenient way forward to contribute to the solution of the crisis than the holding of the elections legally convoked for November 29. Only the elections will give legitimacy to the popular will. We remind the international community that the government does not direct the electoral process, but that the said democratic process, in accordance with our Constitution and laws, is managed, organized, directed and supervised by a Supreme Electoral Tribunal and independent and autonomous electoral bodies; that the internal party elections that produced the candidacies for popular election were convoked and verified just as the convocation of these general elections, before the events of June 28, which is why any position aimed at failing to recognize elections that are free and transparent would not only aggravate the crisis we are experiencing but would also be a total and absurd negotiation of the principles upheld by democracy. Therefore, we request from the international community due respect for our national laws and the principles of self governance of nations, thereby contributing to strengthening rather than weakening them.

End Text.

¶4. (SBU) Comment. With their meetings on the same day with Micheletti and President Zelaya, the candidates have positioned themselves as a bridge between the two parties. They have also publicly highlighted to the Honduran people that the San Jose Accord is still alive and can provide a framework for a solution to the country's crisis. The regime's actions over the weekend, including the issuance of a draconian decree limiting civil liberties, make it all the more important that we continue to push the candidates' initiative.

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